



## Westerman, Bishop Host Event Promoting Working Forests, Outdoor Sportsmanship

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 14, 2019

**CONTACT:** [Rebekah Hoshiko](#); [Madeline Bryant](#) (202) 225-3772

**WASHINGTON** – Today, U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-Ark.) and U.S. Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-Ga.), co-chairs of the Congressional Working Forests Caucus, hosted a bipartisan briefing to highlight how collaborative forest management and a healthy rural economy leads to better wildlife habitats across the U.S.

*"A lot of people have said, 'Save the habitat, save the hunt.' I would change it to, 'Science the habitat, save the wildlife, save the environment and save the water quality,'" Westerman said. "Growing up, there was very little forest management around my father's farm, and we saw the effect on the wildlife population. If someone saw so much as a deer track in the forest, that was a huge deal. Once active forest management began, however, the deer, turkey, and quail populations were all restored tenfold. Now every time I'm back home in Hot Springs, I'll pass 20 to 30 deer just standing on the side of the road. I know the science works. I've seen it firsthand. That's why it's so exciting to have this group together to discuss how forests and wildlife work together. ... I am filled with optimism for what can actually happen with our forests and with our wildlife with the innovations we see with forest products today."*

*"Collaboration is not only possible, but it's also the most effective thing we can do," Bishop said.*

*"My theme today is optimism. We can see right now that congressmen devote time to working forests, and understand their importance," said Craig Blair, president and CEO of Resource Management Service. "They're the lifeblood of communities and habitats for species. When I was studying forestry in the 1970s, we were taught we had adversaries in D.C. But over time we realized that environmental and economic benefits weren't exclusive. We can demonstrate to society the large benefits of working forests, and promote conservation without conflict. The progress we've made is remarkable."*

### **Other participants in the discussion included:**

U.S. Sen. Angus King (I-Maine)

U.S. Rep. French Hill (R-Ark.)

U.S. Rep. Gary Palmer (R-Ala.)

Wendi Weber, Northeast regional director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Jeff Crane, president, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Colin O'Mara, president and CEO, National Wildlife Federation

Photos:





###